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SUBJECT: COTE D,IVOIRE SANCTIONS COMMITTEE ADDRESSES  
VIOLATIONS

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The Cote d'Ivoire Sanctions Committee reviewed recent reports from UNOCI about the political situation, access of the political opposition to local media and UN efforts to enforce the arms embargo. The Committee also considered an alleged sanctions violation involving Charles Ble Goude, an Ivorian who signed a book contract in violation of the UN-mandated asset freeze imposed on him in ¶2006. The Chair proposed that a letter be circulated to the Cote d'Ivoire Permanent Representative, reminding Ivorian authorities of their obligation to enforce the asset freeze. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) The Cote d'Ivoire Sanctions Committee met on March 27, 2009, to review reports of recent human rights and arms embargo violations covering the period of October 2008 to February 2009. UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) advisor Samuel Gahigi briefed the Committee on recent UNOCI December 2008-February 2009 Media and Arms Embargo reports. He noted that inequitable access to national radio and television for members of the opposition and civil society remains a significant barrier to electoral progress. Gahigi also highlighted that members of the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) and the New Forces (FN) have different interpretations regarding implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement (NOTE: The Ouagadougou Agreement was signed by Ivorian President Gbagbo and rebel leader Guillaume Soro on March 4, 2007. END NOTE.) He also mentioned that delays in the restoration of state authority and the reunification of forces remain a serious issue to Ivorian stability. Gahigi noted that UNOCI had not reported any violations of the embargo during this reporting period, although Ivorian officials blocked UN inspectors from a number of key sites.

¶3. (SBU) The French representative stated that the media reports indicate that the Ivorian press is becoming increasingly critical of UNOCI activities. He said it was important to penalize the perpetrators of acts of violence in order to advance the peace process, noting attacks by Young Patriots against voter registration centers. The British representative concurred and expressed particular concern about sexual violence and violence against women.

¶4. (SBU) The Committee also discussed a sanctions violation involving Charles Ble Goude, whom the Cote d'Ivoire Group of Experts (GOE) alleged recently signed a contract to receive funds for publishing a book. (NOTE: The Cote d'Ivoire Sanctions Committee designated Goude, a leader of the Young Patriots, for targeted sanctions in 2006 for his role in fomenting violence against UN personnel and being an obstacle to the peace process. END NOTE.) The GOE asserted that this book contract, as with any contractual honorariums with an author, constituted a breach of UN targeted sanctions. Gahigi explained that the Young Patriots organized a sit-in demonstration in front of ONUCI headquarters, demanding the lifting of sanctions against Ble Goude and two other Ivorians. The Chair proposed that a letter be sent to the

Cote d'Ivoire Permanent Representative, reminding Ivorian authorities of their obligation to enforce UN-mandated asset freezes.

15. (SBU) The U.S. representative supported the Chair's proposal. The Russian representative proposed merging all of the questions the Committee might have on the status of Cote d'Ivoire sanctions into a single letter, to be distributed sometime after the upcoming meeting to discuss the midterm report of the GOE on April 8, 2009. The French and Ugandan representatives, however, felt that the enforcement of sanctions against Goude was a time-critical issue, especially in light of the media campaign that the Young Patriots were waging. As a result, the Russian representative withdrew his proposal. The chair said he would circulate a draft letter along these lines to the Committee for its review.  
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